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Laotians

116, 101, 619

"The Laos hate being so called; they, as the Shans, the Siamese and the Thos, profess themselves Thais, but the Laos name is one given by neighbours, and the French when they came to know and to govern the land of the Laos, called it just 'Laos.' Therefore, another designation had to be found for the people, so the bastard term, Laotians, was coined and it has now become classic."

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[525] is the long pirogue, and the jockeys are the oarsmen. Nor will it be
422 in vain to remark that, as in our races, heavy wagers are often laid
by the owners and the lovers of this kind of sport,

Thais or Phou-Thais. The Thais or Phou-Thais are divided into
four distinct groups. These are:

1. The Khao-Thais (white);
2. The Dam-Thais (black);
3. The Deng-Thais (red);
4. The Neua-Thais (northern).

The Khao-Thais are the result of marriages between Chinese men and Dam-Thai women, or vice versa, although the former case is the most frequent. They do not form large agglomerations, but only isolated family groups in the midst of the surrounding population. They are found only in the northern part of the Sib-Song-Chau-Thais, a territory which is dependent on Laos from the ethnographic point of view but administratively attached to Tonkin.

The following is what is known of their origin: [229] [Illustration] [230] [Blank page] [231]

"Around 1600 a rebel Chinese leader assembled a few partisans, set sail from Canton and landed at Haiphong. From there he went on to Bac-Ninh, continually increasing the number of his men. At Bac-Ninh the rebel leader received an envoy from the king of Annam, who asked him to help put down the Thais and the Muongs of the Black River. The Chinese leader accepted, and after leaving Bac-Ninh he went to Lao-Kay, from which point he soon entered the province of the Sib-Sing-Chau-Thais. After defeating the Thais and the Muongs he was given this province out of gratitude for his help. His troops, worn out by the campaign, settled in the country and lost no time in marrying Thai women. It was from such unions that the white Thais were born" (1).

(1) E. Picanon, op. cit. [Le Laos français, Paris, 1901.]

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563 Dam-Thais and Deng-Thais. These two varieties have a common origin and belong to the same family (2). The different names which

(2) Thais are found in nearly all of Laos, where they are scattered among the Laotian population. They are particularly numerous in the Hua-Pahn, where they are in the majority in certain muonga.

• 619 they bear come, as in the case of the Khao-Thais, from peculiarities
 [291] of costume. In fact, whereas the Dam-Thais, both men and women,
 563 only wear clothing which is dark blue and almost black, with no
 colored ornamentation, the Deng-Thais, although they wear the
 same kind of clothing, always add a few ornaments such as embroidery,
 galloons or red turbans.

142 Physical appearance. Costume. The Thais have strongly marked
 461 features and stern faces. Their complexion is clear and rather swarthy,
 and they are quite tall. They are more hardy and above all more
 industrious than the Laotians.

302 Like the Annamites, the men let their hair grow. They bind it
 291 up in a coil on the top of the head and cover it with a vast turban,
 the ends of which fall onto their shoulders on either side of the face.
 Men's clothing consists of a broad pair of trousers with a very low
 seat and a straight tunic buttoned along the side which comes down
 to the knees. A sort of sash made of the same kind of cloth hugs the
 [286] waist over the tunic, as a belt would do. The material used by the
 Thais for clothing are made of cotton which is generally grown locally
 and which the [232] women spin, weave and dye themselves. Their
 garments, made with very coarse, irregular thread, have a rough ap-
 pearance but are very solid.

142 The women's figures are thick-set but not fleshy. Their faces,
 which are more rounded than elongated, are pleasant and their eyes
 are beautiful. But childbearing and the work of the fields soon destroy
 their gracefulness, and after the age of twenty-five their figures thicken,
 their wrists and ankles become heavy and their faces begin to harden
 and wrinkle. [Illustration alongside text here]

[286] The Thai woman wears a skirt which is quite similar to the Laotian
 291 skirt, but made of coarser cloth and dyed the same color as the men's
 563 clothing. Over this she wears a very short jacket made of the same
 cloth which is buttoned down the front and sometimes embellished
 with chased silver work. The height of elegance is for the jacket to
 be cut in such a way that when the woman moves in a certain way it
 lets a little skin be seen above the skirt waist. Outside the home and for
 ceremonies the women put on a sort of dressing gown which covers their
 other clothing and comes down to the ankle. Its sleeves are very close-
 fitting, and the garment buttons straight down the front to a point below
 the waist. A strip of dark violet cloth, for the Dam-Thais, and red for

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619 The Neua-Thais. The Neua-Thais differ very little, in all
361 respects, from their fellows. They generally live on higher ground
than the other Thais, but they change the location of their village
quite frequently. [241] [Illustration] [242] [Blank page] [243]

291 The women knot their skirts under their armpits, above their
breasts, and always wear a very short jacket made of cotton, silk or
velvet, depending on the season,

231 They engage in sericulture, and with the silk spin and weave
brocaded cloth with harmonious colors.

779 At the same time as ancestor worship, the Neu-Thais practice
an attenuated form of Buddhism. Pagodas are rare and the bonzes,
few in number, serve several centers in turn.

461 Their character is docile. They do not have a very marked taste
276 for trade and are content to be excellent farmers and livestock breeders.
Unfortunately, they are inclined to be opium smokers. This is doubt-
less due to the proximity of the Meos and Yaos who are the producers
of the drug.

619 The Phou-Eunes. This branch of the Thai family is very close to
101 the Laotians in mores and customs.

There are only a few modifications in costume and language,
modifications due to the age-old proximity of the Annamites and the
continuous relations which have existed between the two peoples.

[438] These latter may be explained by the fact that the territory long
inhabited by the Phou-Eunes in the east and southeast of Tran-Ninh is
situated on the Tonkin Gulf side, and that their produce naturally
flows towards the ports on the Annamite coast (1).

(1) To be sure, there are several groupings of Phou-Eunes in the
Mekong basin, in Tran-Ninh, to the northeast of Vien-Tiane and
in Camkeut-Cammon.

361 The Phou-Eunes prefer to live in high valleys and on high plateaus
where the climate is quite severe during the winter. They are more
reserved in character than the Laotians, more industrious and less in-
clined to celebrations and festivities of all kinds.

779 Their religion is Buddhism, but the bonzes are less numerous than
elsewhere. It is probable that the little taste which Phou-Eunes have
for the religious life is due to the influence of nearby Annam, where
the bonzes are a long way from being venerated and coddled as they
are in Laos.

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Men's and women's clothing varies little in [244] form from that of the Thais. Under their jacket, however, the women wear a breast-cloth attached to the neck and waist by cords, like the Annamite and Tonkinese women. 291

The Lus. Two centuries or so ago the Lus, who also belong to the Thai race, used to live in the "Shan states" between the Salouen and the Nam-Hon, where they were surrounded by a drifting population composed of Burmese, Kunes, Ngieous, etc. [Illustration alongside text here.] 619 175

Following emigrations, they came to Laos and formed two distinct agglomerations.

Some Lu families have settled in the course of this century on the territory of Luang-Prabang. Today these Lus form villages composed exclusively of people of their race, but live on good terms with the Laotians, whose language and customs they have adopted. [563]

In the old Lu kingdom of Muong-Sing, on the other hand, this people has retained its habits, that is to say its character and temperament are like those of the Burmese. 101

There the Lu is boastful, full of arrogance, a braggart and insolent, but a little firmness is enough to humble his pride. [105]

Lus have a clear complexion, delicate features, keen eyes and a swinging stride. The men are generally tattooed from the calf of the leg to above the navel, and they also have tattoos on their chest. [245] neck, shoulders and arms which are generally red and in the shape of squares with rounded corners. They have long hair rolled in a coil on top or slightly to one side of the head. This coil is wrapped in an enormous turban which they wear tilted over one ear. Many of them have a moustache. This they train upwards, a trait which gives them a conquering air, and to keep it up they smear it with wax. [Illustration alongside text here] 142 304 302

The men's costume consists of a pair of full trousers and a short jacket buttoned along the side. It is made of cotton and is dark blue, almost black, in color. The bottoms of the trousers, the edges of the jacket, the cuffs of the sleeves and the armholes are ornamented with three galloons (blue, white and red) which are quite narrow. Their holiday clothes are often made of silk in varied colors. 291

The women wind their hair into a heavy coil on top of the head and on the side of the coil they place a broad circular plaque of chased silver. They wear skirts like the Laotian women, but the stripes are very broad, run crosswise and are in bright colors. They [302] [301]

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whole match, instead of keeping their legs rigid and remaining on the same line, the opponents turn constantly around a central point and raise each leg in turn, the knee bent. This exercise, in which all four limbs work at once and which requires a sure eye and rapid execution, is surely one of the most graceful in existence when it is performed with the facile ease and supreme elegance of the Lus.

"Lu dancing has that particular character of morbidness which one finds among most Mohammedan peoples and also in Spain. The men (for the men are the ones who dance) imprint on their feet only those movements which are indispensable for making the body pivot and facilitating slow, undulating movements by the hips, torso and arms. The dancers are accompanied by tom-toms and kettledrums, and they sigh out lingering, voluptuous chants which harmonize well with their movements. These are veritable harem dances, or such as dancing girls might perform." (*Le Laos français*.) [Lieutenant-colonel Tournier (Superior Resident in Laos), "Notice sur le Laos français," in *Revue Indochinoise*, Hanoi, 1900.]

We have already seen what the religion of the Lus is like, and need add only that their bonzes are highly respected and that the pagodas are much frequented by the children and young people. Thus the number of scholars is higher among the Lus than among the Laotians. Many women even know how to read and write.

The Lus do not cremate their dead, but bury them, even at a very shallow depth, after wrapping the bodies in a mat or a piece of cloth. The bonzes recite a few prayers over the grave when it has been filled, and in return for this service usually receive an object of some value which belonged to the deceased.

[250] The tombs are not kept up.

The Youns. The natives called Youns are Laotians who have settled on the right bank of the Mekong, in the basin of the Upper Menam and in the territories of Xieng-Hai, Xieng-Khong and Xieng-Sen. There are, however, Youns living in French Laos where they have mixed with the other Laotians. [Illustration alongside text here]

The Youns may be distinguished from their fellow Laotians by the extent to which they are tattooed. Whereas a Laotian will only be tattooed from the bend of the knee to the waist, a Youn will be tattooed from the calf of the leg to the chest. This has caused the inhabitants of the right bank to be baptized "Black Bellies" (Lao-Phoung-Dam), while those of the left bank are called Lap-Phoung-Khao or "White Bellies."

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Tyibai Tai
Kha

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The men's costume is like that of the Laotians. A few, however, have adopted the Burmese costume, turban and all, in which case they let their hair grow and roll it in a coil instead of having a brush cut.

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The women wear a very long skirt with broad stripes running across it which is fastened beneath the breasts. The bust is covered by a closed jacket or bodice which is cut straight and made of cotton or silk of varied colors. Their hair is rolled in a coil on the nape of the neck or is held in place around the head by a narrow band of cloth and allowed to fall freely down the back. Both sexes wear metal cylinders in their ears, like the Lus, and silver jewelry.

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The Youns are more robust than their fellows, and also more industrious. The women are perhaps less pretty than the Laotian women, but they are just as friendly and merry.

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[251] Both men and women chew betel, and also "Mieng" (green tea, fermented and salted). They smoke tobacco in enormous cigarettes rolled in dried banana leaves. [Illustration alongside text here]

The Youns are primarily farmers and livestock breeders. They excel in breeding and training oxen as draft animals.

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We have seen that the Youns, although they speak the same language as the Laotians, have their own form of writing which is generally used for religious writings. Their bonzes, who are highly learned for the most part, are renowned for their expert knowledge of the rites of the Buddhist religion.

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Marriage, divorce, polygamy, births, funerals, celebrations and festivities are all the same among the Youns as among the Laotians, except for a few minor differences in detail which we need not mention here.

THE KHAS

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Before entering into detail about the mores and customs of the main Kha families, we shall again have recourse to the learned work by the Superior Resident in Laos in order to give a general sketch of this race which represents at least a third of the population.

[252] "They are to be found throughout the territory, and are divided into more than sixty families. As much as those who inhabit northern Laos are docile, manageable and respectful, so are those who inhabit the southern part of Laos proud, independent and warlike, particularly the tribes inhabiting the mountains which separate us from Annam.

Kha

result. But the Kha ideal is to possess a battery of gongs of different sizes and timbres, and with these they manage to obtain quite perfect chords. 533

Industry. Withdrawn in their mountains where they live in small isolated groups, the Khas use their leisure time to make many basket-work and hollow-ware products which have a mark of elegance and a great deal of delicacy. Other tribes make paper from wood pulp, weave mats from rattan and bamboo bark, etc. They use all these products in trade. 433

Finally, certain Khas exploit deposits of iron ore and transform it into farming implements, while others wash gold-bearing sands. 316

In general, although the Khas are industrious they work only to procure what is strictly indispensable. They cannot resign themselves to staying away from home for any length of time and dread any stay in the low country, which they say is unhealthy for them. Since they have particular aptitudes for woodcutting, however, they have been successfully employed to cut teak wood in the forests on the right bank of the Mekong which are situated in Siamese territory. But it must be admitted that there they are in mountainous country and in the midst of forests, as in their native region. 461 [313]

The Khas of southern Laos. In southern Laos Khas are found who differ very little from those of Upper Laos. We shall not concern ourselves with them, but shall deal briefly with the many more numerous ones who have particular mores and customs.

The Djarais, the Rades, the Bahnars, the Cedangs, the Peunongs, the Rognaos (1), etc. are the principal types of these Kha tribes. [619]

(1) See Appendix XVIII.

which for the most part are still independent.

These people are proud, large and muscular, supple, trained in all forms of bodily exercise, bold, warlike and brave. 181

These qualities, moreover, have been developed by their peculiar way of [257] [Illustration] [258] [Blank page] [259] life. 567

Accustomed to hunting slaves from which they extracted large profits by selling them on the banks of the Mekong, these Khas have had to resort to continual expeditions in order to obtain their human game. 721

For many long years, in fact, they could acquire [Illustration here] the gongs, buffalo, metals, textiles, etc. which they needed only by selling captives, generally Annamites, whom they went and 567

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equipment.

411 [264] "It should be noted that these folk do not have rifles. Their crossbows are quite large, and shoot pointed barbed arrows, which are poisoned in time of war, over great distances.

"The spears are of average length. The shafts are made of very beautiful bamboo, and the iron points are of varied shapes.

"The swords have long hilts ornamented with tin, and the blades are slightly curved.

"Among the Djarais bucklers are made of wood and shielded with tin. Among the Kasengs they are made of buffalo hide, and among the Cedangs of buckskin with the fleece left on.

"Among the Cedangs the bucklers take the shape of a shield, while their shape varies among the others." (Le Laos français.)

[Lieutenant-colonel Tournier (Superior Resident in Laos). "Notice sur le Laos français," in Revue Indochinoise, Hanoi, 1900.]

563 Khas of mixed blood. In the section on races we have seen what
619 mixtures were produced from crossings between Khas and other members of the great Thai family. Their distribution is as follows:

1. The Phou-Phays and Phou-Thengs are found scattered everywhere throughout northern Laos;

2. Soṣ and Seks are found in Luang-Prabeng, Tran-Ninh and Cammon;

3. The Soues inhabit the high valleys of the Se-Bang-Hien and the Sedone and the northern slopes of the plateau of the Bolovens.

The evolution of all these mixed blood varieties is not yet complete, and many have partly retained their original dialects. Certain tribes, however, have completely adopted the mores and languages of the dominant races to which they owe their existence, and these have pagodas, bonzes, etc.

RACES OF MONGOL ORIGIN

619 We know that individuals of Mongol origin inhabit northern Laos
563 and are grouped in three principal varieties known as Hos, Meos and Yaos.

The Hos. The Hos are inhabitants of Yunnan who came to Laos either with the robber bands (1875-1888) or with caravans. [265] [Illustration] [266] [Blank page] [267]

They settled in Laos, abandoning their guns and packs to become farmers, hog breeders, tea planters, etc.

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Almost all are of low birth and are crude and illiterate. They have married Thai or Kha women and thereby founded a stock of halfbreeds. This race is destined to merge with the mass of the Laotians or Thai population and through successive crossings lose all distinctive characteristics.

The Meos. The Meos are also Yunnanese who have retained a degree of independence and have not been marked with the Chinese imprint like the Hos or adopted baggy clothes and the custom of wearing their hair only in a braid.

They are distributed in groups of a few families each of which live on the peaks of the mountains in northern Laos and the Sib-Song Chau-Thais. They can be divided into three great families--the blacks, the whites and the reds--which owe their names to the color of certain parts of the women's costume. Thus among the black and red Meos skirts or jackets are light blue in color, but the latter have a wide collar ornamented with black or red embroidery. Finally, a small turban with black and white checks or of red material, depending on the case, completes their garb. Among the white Meos, the women wear a skirt and jacket of unbleached cloth, with a white and blue embroidered collar.

The men's clothing is light blue in all cases. It is composed of a broad pair of trousers which come down somewhat below the calf, where the legs are drawn tight, and of a short, tight-sleeved jacket which buttons down one side.

A turban winds around the head and covers their long hair, which may be rolled or braided.

The women's hair is parted and wound on the upper part of the nape of the neck in a coil. (1)

(1) See Appendix XIX.

The Meos practice ancestor worship primarily, like many Asian peoples. They have no pagodas or bonzes, but elders perform the office of priests and also administer justice.

[268] The Meos bury their dead, and make animal sacrifices on the occasion of births, marriages and deaths so as to gain the favor of the "Phis" or multiple and varied geni in whose existence and influence they believe.

Marriage is as simple as among the other peoples of Laos.

Divorce may occur either through mutual consent or in the case of adultery.

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595 There is polygamy among the Meos, and the Meo women do not enjoy any higher regard than the Kha women.

[101] The Yaos. The Yaos have the same origin as the Meos, and are strikingly like them in many respects. Their mores, their beliefs and their habits are identical.

• 619 As we have seen above, the Yaos are divided into three varieties, these being the Lantenes, the Khao and the Ao-Tchaine.

291 The Lantenes (blacks) wear broad trousers, a long smock buttoning at the side and a turban, all made of black cottonstuff. They wear
302 their hair long and either wound under a turban or braided in Chinese style.

[342] Their houses are like those of the Meos and shelter several families, each of which has its own quarters. They are generally clean and well kept-up.

593 The mores of the Lantene Yaos are patriarchal, and these folk
562 are monogamous. The women are very reserved and do not let themselves be seen much by strangers. They enjoy a certain respect and are treated with consideration by their husbands.

231 The Lantenes are great livestock breeders, and cultivate the opium
241 poppy in addition to rice and maize. They are skilled hunters of wild
224 animals, and each man owns a rifle from which he is rarely separated.

[212] Besides a dialect peculiar to them, they speak Quoan-hoa (a
198 Cantonese idiom), and many of them can write Chinese characters.

101 The Khao Yaos are less outgoing than their fellows and do not greet strangers with as much good will.

291 The men's clothing is like that of the Lantenes, [269] but the women are garbed in a different manner and wear their hair in a special way which has earned their tribe the name "Khao" (horns).

Over a pair of black trousers ornamented with colored embroidery and held in place by leggings, Khao Yao women wear a tunic which comes down to the knees but the flaps of which are fastened to the belt. This tunic also has colored embroidery on the chest, back, neck and cuffs, and is held shut with wide silver hooks.

302 Their hairdress consists of a coil which is smeared with wax and lacquer to hold it in place and in which a wooden socket is imbedded. A light bamboo framework is inserted into the socket, and over this is spread a red cloth or a black cloth embroidered in red. The women thus appear to have two horns on their head.

301 Silver jewelry, neckbands, bracelets and ear pendants are worn by the Khao Yaos.

Kha

563 their prisoners among the Djarais. This state of affairs cannot go on
 567 [106] indefinitely, and after settling the question of the Djarais which
 is more urgent, it will be necessary for Annam and Laos to pacify
 these tribes by a common agreement.

563 4. Rognao, Bahnar, Goelar and Habau Khas. These tribes, over
 797 whom the missionaries exercise moral authority and n. v of whose
 villages are Catholic, can be regarded as pacified even though they
 do not pay any tribute. I have previously explained why it would not
 be politic, in my opinion, to require tribute in this region as of the
 present time.

These tribes, which are entirely located in Laotian territory, are
 quite tranquil but in continual dread of undertakings by their Djarai
 neighbors.

563 5. The great Djarai tribe, which is by far the most important and
 most numerous in the estimation of the missionaries. It is said to
 include nearly 150,000 inhabitants and is the finest racial type which
 I have seen in all the Kha region.

Many villages are subject to our authority and pay the head tax.
 Others, such as those which I found in the valley of the Psi and on the
 Sesane, obey our orders, keep the roads in repair, receive traders and
 travelers with perfect hospitality and will pay tribute whenever we
 wish.

563 But there are two groups which are absolutely rebellious to our
 619 penetration. These are: 1) the groups of villages of Pley-Qho and
 643 Pley-Denang immediately south of the mission; and 2), somewhat
 579 further to the south, the group of the Sadetes whose two chieftains,
 the kings of water and fire, inhabit the points which are marked on
 the map as Pa-Tao-Ia and Pa-Tao-Ngo.

563 The first of these groups has continuously committed hostile
 668 acts against us. They are the ones who attacked the convoy of M.
 726 Navelle when this official came to visit the mission, who have
 constantly attacked convoys on the road from Ang-Ke to Kon-Toum,
 who more recently robbed a Laotian hunter of merchandise valued at
 more than 1,000 piasters and pierced him with sword thrusts, and,
 finally, who attacked M. Lacouture and killed one of his guides.
 These villages are dreaded by all their neighbors. It was they against
 whom Meyréna (1) marched, but his success was not sufficiently

(1) Since I have been led to pronounce the name of the man who
 dreamed of creating a Cedang kingdom, I should say a few words
 regarding this adventure which seems to me to have been greatly
 exaggerated.

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I shall not dwell on all the personalities implicated in the matter, for I have neither the right nor the means to define the responsibilities incurred, but shall simply say that his authority has never been recognized by the Khass in any effective fashion. In a gathering held in the common house of Kou-Hoitrin and at which the representatives of some twenty Cedang villages were present, he appeared in the guise of one who had come to lead them in their defense against attacks by their neighbors and to command them against the enemy Djarais (the tribes of Pley-Qho and Pley-Demang, to be exact). His proposal was naturally accepted, and was also given sanction by some semblance of an expedition against the Djarais. When the Cedangs did not take all the booty and especially all the prisoners that they had anticipated, they broke off relations with Meyréna. What is more, when Father Vialleton, the director of the Catholic mission of the Bahnars and a man of extremely subtle mind, subsequently realized what the situation was, he did not want to enter into open conflict with Meyréna but was content to set up a confederation of the Bahnar, Rognao and Goelar tribes, a confederation which had the Kha chieftain of the village of Kou-Toum at its head, but which was under the moral and actual leadership of Father Vialleton. This master stroke, the only purpose of which had been to prevent Meyréna's authority from prevailing over these tribes, dealt the death blow to the kingdom of which he had dreamed and he was obliged to leave the country.

Such, in all its simplicity, is the truth of this adventure when disengaged from all the little incidents of a more or less humorous nature which occurred at the time.

followed up. It is [107] now necessary that this den of bandits should disappear or surrender. The hatred which they have aroused against themselves is so great that during my inspection tour all the neighboring tribes, including the Cedangs, asked permission to join forces with me and march against them immediately. I had to promise that satisfaction would be given them.

When this group has disappeared or surrendered, all the hesitant factions of Djarais, Salangs and Halangs-Doang will make their submission once and for all.

As for the second group, that of the Sadetes, the question is a ticklish one. The two Sadete kings are unquestionably the religious leaders of all the Kha tribes south of the Cedangs. According to the

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traditions and the annals which I have been able to consult, they are the descendants of the last kings of the land before the Cham invasion. The kings of Cambodia have had to appeal to them for help on one or two critical occasions, and it was in return for services rendered that the king of Cambodia, up until recent times, used to send them presents every year (or at least annually, according to them, payment of which stopped only five years ago).

They have never been willing to recognize our authority. The king of Pa-Tao-la, who is situated on the Laotian side, twice attacked the Government Commissioners of Stung-Treng when the latter were making a tour of inspection in this region, first in December 1894 and a second time in January 1897. They were given a severe lesson this second time, for the village was entirely destroyed and they suffered many losses. The Sadete Loum (the Master of water) settled on the Annamite side alongside the Master of fire after the affair, and since that time has given no further orders to our faithful Djarals.

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APPENDIX XIX NOTE ON THE MEOS

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The Meo has a savage and distrustful character. He does not like the presence of foreigners, or even of people of his own race. Clinging to the side of a mountain, and always as high up as possible, he asks only to be allowed to live in peace in his wild solitude and bodes no ill to anyone provided he is left alone and independent.

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He is a great hunter of wild beasts and large game. More industrious than the Thais, he makes all his farming implements himself (picks and shovels), as well as his wooden buckets and mills for grinding maize and paddy. He raises fine poultry, pigs, oxen, goats and horses with particular care and success. If he stays in one place for any length of time he also produces, in addition to the maize and rice which form the basis of his food supply and the opium which he smokes, very fine eggplants, gourds, sweet potatoes and non-sweetened batatas very much like the common potato, sorrel, green beans and all the French vegetables whose seeds are given him. On his heights he cultivates the fruit trees which merely vegetate in the plains, such as the peach tree, and the peaches which he harvests can compete without any fear with those of our own country.

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The Meo climbs like a cat. Over sheer paths, up ladders composed of a single bamboo pole standing upright in which notches are cut at regular intervals which are large enough for two toes, the Meo